

## The Architectural Pearls of Our Philippines

By Harry Talfourd Frost

The flying fishes found it hard to get off the step, like seaplane in the dead calm. The Pacific was that calm just before sunset—a vast gently undulating sheet of gold-leaf. With the Skipper we stood watching three ships in single file a mile or two away, but huge against the southern sky. Off to the southwest 25 miles or so is Yap, tied down by the trans-Pacific cable. To the northeast is Guam. Versailles gave Yap to the Japanese, who with exquisite tolerance allowed us to maintain our cable and coaling station there. The destiny of Guam has since been settled without finesse. The ship out in front was a destroyer. It was closely followed by the 18,000 ton S.S. President Coolidge, which had taken us to Manila less than two years before, decks now piled high with crates. Tagging along was a tanker. The convoy slowly receding in the west left our lonely freighter and its two passengers with a sort of abandoned feeling. It was more than two months before Pearl Harbor, but unidentified searchlight beams from the sky, and radio orders from the Navy told us that the War was almost upon us.

We were returning from the Philippines after completing the plan of the new Capital—Quezon City, and other projects, one of which is the Plan of Tagaytay, a resort city on Lake Taal in Southern Luzon. The Manila Hotel on the Bay had been our home, and ships of the Seven Seas parading past our windows had incited us to make a detour on the way home, in spite of the predictions that the Japanese would go off the deep end at any time now—onto “National hara-kari”! We arranged to take a Japanese ship scheduled to sail from Hong Kong to Buenos Aires, which was to call at ports in Malaya, India and Africa, when suddenly a vague cable from Kobe told us that her plans had been changed. So finally, with Uncle Sam’s somewhat reluctantly-granted permission, and with visas extracted from the British and Dutch consuls, we set out to see Netherlands India and Malaya.

Thus it was that our unscheduled Dutch ship eased through the mine-fields of Manila Bay, between Corregidor and Bataan, into the China Sea. Four peaceful days and three hot blacked-out nights on the Sulu and Celebes Seas, down across the Equator with glimpses of Palawan and Borneo, finally threading our way among beautiful coral islands — dozens of them — we reached Makassar, from where the Nantucket dudes in the privateer days got their hair-oil. It was in these waters that, a short time later, our Navy cooperating with the Dutch surprised and punished the first large Japanese convoy intent upon the invasion of Borneo.

Leisurely we visited Celebes, Bali and Java under the watchful eye of the gendarmerie, and then Singapore, Johore, Kuala Lumpur and Penang—all jittery and fearful, but preparing feverishly for the blow that was to destroy them. Finally we boarded a freighter out of Penang with a cargo of rubber, bound for an Atlantic seaboard port. And so to Panama Harbor where we were put over the side with our duffle, as she slowly moved up toward the Mira

Flores Locks, to continue our journey by plane up through Central America.

Since then, the places in Manila that we knew so well, the places where we liked to congregate—The Polo Club, the Army & Navy Club, the Manila Hotel and the little Taza de Oro—have been overrun by the Runts of the Orient, now as ever pitifully trying to demean themselves as they think we do. Since then the Pacific—our Pacific has become infested with these marauders.

Since then we have entered upon an Epoch of War. The pursuits of peace have taken a holiday; the Capitol building and miles of streets in the new Quezon City that occupies 30 square miles, the initial six buildings on the new campus of the University of the Philippines, and many a public market, school and hospital—work on these has ceased. The permanent National Exposition was rapidly taking form on a 160 acre site, also in Quezon city. This is to be a great industrial and agricultural exposition for the Orient, in recognition of the growing importance of the Philippines as a mekka for world trade. Three buildings were nearly completed, a 12-acre lagoon built, and landscaping of the grounds was progressing. About a mile of stone wall two meters high had been finished—a good beginning for a concentration camp! It had been planned to open the Fair in November of this year, and to continue it every year thereafter, adding one permanent building each year until 1946, which was to mark the independence of the Philippines according to present legislation. But that was before the Japanese taught us that we will be beleaguered on our continent by 1946 unless we subdue them.

It is a mere coincidence that the fall of Spain as a world power, and the renaissance of city planning in the United States ran concurrently. It was not a coincidence that a City Plan for Manila was decided upon not long after our occupation of the Philippines. It was part of a great movement which included mass education, that our first civil government thought must be brought to the Filipinos. Our vague original ambition was exploitation of a new province—a sensation that didn’t materialize. And exploitation it never will be. But if the Japanese of crooked mind and body don’t teach us realism, and convince us that our anchor to the eastward is a vital thing to us, it won’t be their fault.

Daniel H. Burnham, Sr., of Chicago was invited to the Philippines, and out of that visit grew the Plans of Manila and Baguio, in the development of which Edward H. Bennett and the late Peirce Anderson participated, the latter going to the Philippines to work out the details. Manila of course is the ancient capital. Its crammed Intramuros is surrounded by massive walls that were built in the 16th century. The Plan of Manila was done in the grand manner of the 19th century, which one of our commentators on city planning refers to as imperialistic. We don’t know why. Baguio on the other hand is a made-to-order city, created in the majestic pine forests of the Mountain Provinces, 5,000 feet above Lingayan Bay, and 175 miles from Manila



in northern Luzon. Baguio is a beautiful place, hilly and informal in plan. It was designed to be the summer Capital, but has developed into a resort. The late William E. Parsons, who spent nine years as Supervising Architect of the Philippines, did much to further the development of Baguio before his return to the United States in 1913. His works in the Philippines are extensive, and include the famous Manila Hotel and a large number of schools and other public buildings.

With the inauguration of the Commonwealth of Philippines in 1936, and a strong urge on the part of its first President to better the condition of the poorly housed and undernourished tao, two vast haciendas adjoining Manila were purchased by the Government. These estates comprise ten square miles, or one-third of the area that was to be Quezon City. Originally most of it was intended to be used for low-cost housing. But the plan expanded, and out of it grew the new Capital City, a corporation which absorbed other vacant lands, as well as several suburbs of Manila that were badly in need of a plan for the coordination of their schools, parks, streets and public utilities. Quezon City unlike Washington and the modern Canberra of Australia is an integral part of a great metropolitan district. When its boundaries were determined, more than 40,000 people already lived in Quezon City—in an assortment of barrios and suburbs that were growing in a random fashion. It has been my privilege to develop the Plan of the new Capital City, and to reconcile its facilities with the extensive new campus of the 33-year-old University of the Philippines, the permanent National Exposition and the city of Manila.

The time-honored mansion of the Chief Executive of the Philippines is Malacañan Palace, on the sluggish Pasig River in Manila. Malacañan is the symbol of authority. It is a century old, and the best piece of colonial Spanish architecture in the Philippines. Malacañan was the home of Spanish royal authority. It was the seat of the American military, and later civil governors and, until the Japanese invasion, the official residence of Manuel Luis Quezon, President of the Commonwealth of the Philippines. Like many other substantial mansions of the 19th century, its floors and paneled walls and ceilings are from the vast tropical forests of the Islands—ACLE, NARRA, MOLAVE, DAO—skillfully joined, carved and polished. Most of the architecture of the Philippines is below the standard of Malacañan. The Conquistadores gradually adapted their construction to native materials, and to the climate. For domestic buildings they made use of such materials as bamboo, sawali, nipa and translucent shell, in combination with substantial timbers and imported tile toward a permanent construction, the better to cope with the fabulous typhoons. Strictly speaking, there is no indigenous style. Philippine architecture, or that part of it which is built of lasting materials, is Occidental. The influence of continental Asia or of the islands of Oceania during the four centuries of Spanish dominance has been exceedingly small.

Early in the Christian Era when western Europe was still a wilderness, South Indian civilization came through Malaya to Sumatra and Java, brought in by a Kalinga Prince. This culture was responsible for a remarkable series of monuments, Buddhist and Brahman, built between 700 and 900 A.D. on the Prambanan Plain of Central Java, as well for the works in Cambodia two centuries later. The Borobudur, the Prambanan, the earlier and more beautiful Kalisan, and other stone piles of antiquity left by the Hindu-Javanese princes are now in ruins. On the other

hand the masonry temples and gateways of Bali which are direct descendants of those works are of the present day. Notwithstanding that it is but a short hop from Java and Bali to Borneo or to Celebes, and so to the Sulu group and Mindanao, there is no evidence that this architecture of masonry ever reached the Philippines. Moreover, centuries of trade between the Chinese and the Igorots, Bontocs and the other tribes of northern Luzon produced not a vestige of Chinese influence in their buildings, which there as now are temporary structures. In all probability the buildings of the past everywhere in the Philippines were built of wood and light materials, as the native structures are today. In the up-country of Sumatra there are houses of rough hewn planks. The roofs are high-pitched. Gables end project far out at the crest, and slope in as they descend. The ridgepoles sag in the manner of a tent, and are, I believe, of Indo-Chinese origin. The gables and all the chief posts and beams are covered with beautiful carved work. Evidences of this bizarre trend are seen in the Lanao Lake region of Mindanao, and in other strongholds of the Moros. And this is the only permanent construction that the Spanish invaders found in the Philippines.

But to get back to the Spaniards, who no doubt were keenly disappointed in the leanness of the loot uncovered by the followers of Magellan; theirs was a sort of second-hand Spanish culture, since from the earliest times the Philippine colony was governed, not from Spain, but from Mexico. Thus languorous years of architectural mediocrity passed. Then the classic came to the Philippines with the Americanos. This classic typified the stuffy vogue of the turn of the century in the United States, and it has dominated the monumental public buildings ever since. Meanwhile, schools and the lesser provincial works, institutions, commercial buildings and dwellings continued to be built in the lackadaisical but practical style of Spanish origin—that is, until the recent rash, a sort of modern, of which even habitués of cocktail lounges have tired. Like the classic, most of it bears little relation to the climate of the Philippines, and so will prove to be an unworthy contribution to the art.

Filipinos have long hoped to see the development of a national architecture stemming from the Spanish, but influenced by Oceania and the Orient. The fifty odd peoples and tribes that inhabit the 7,300 islands of the Archipelago range from Malays to Pacific Islanders, and their hearts are in the Orient. But unfortunately the Filipino architects, many of whom have spent some time in the United States schools, will have none of it. Currently they are steeped in the jargon of the cults from Germany and other hot-spots of cracked-up continental Europe. And as long as the profession in the United States falls for their characteristic pretention, (which bears the same relation to architecture as jug-blowing and bazooka-tooting does to music), I suppose the Philippine architects will also.

Relative to the new buildings for the University of the Philippines, I advised the President of the Commonwealth that we are passing through an architectural revolution, and that it would be prudent to consider new permanent works with concern. Ingenious students would ignore the old order, while the thoughtful would look for beauty in traditional examples, and would adapt them to our materials, methods and functions. This revolt is a frolic for builders of commercial and domestic works, many of which won't last long enough to bite their inventors. But the architect about to design a substantial public building finds this era a critical one. The radical would build a great

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**Editor Monthly Bulletin**

ARTHUR WOLTERS DORF, 520 NORTH MICHIGAN AVE., CHICAGO

The Bulletin is glad to be able to present, in this issue, to its readers an authoritative article on architecture in the Philippines by Harry T. Frost, architect and city planner. Mr. Frost recently returned to this country from the Philippines after an absence of a year and a half on an assignment from President Manuel Quezon to design Quezon City, an extension to Manila destined to house the Capitol with other government buildings, the University, official residences and the like. He was to design Tagaytay and other Philippine towns (see "Notes on a New Capital City in the Orient" by Harry T. Frost, October-November, 1940 [S.A. Bulletin]).

Of all American city planners and architects, Mr. Frost's firm, Bennett, Parsons & Frost, Chicago, have a familiarity with the Philippines going back through the years shared by no other firm. The late Daniel H. Burnham, after peace and quiet was restored following the Spanish War, in the first years of this century, was invited to the Philippines. From this grew the plans of Manila and Baguio in which Edward H. Bennett and Peirce Anderson participated.

William E. Parsons, a young man crowned with architectural school honors and returned to New York, severed his office connections there to accept appointment in 1905 to go to the Philippines and conduct building operations for the United States government. He was charged with the interpretation of the Burnham plans for Manila and Baguio. He devoted nine years to this, building many important government buildings. Then he resigned and returned to the United States. In 1922 he joined Messrs. Bennett and Frost under the firm name of Bennett, Parsons & Frost, architects and city planners. This editorial would be much too long if it enumerated all the important work that this firm has done for municipalities and the United States government. Suffice it to say that Mr. Parsons again visited the Philippines in 1939 and died in New Haven, Connecticut in December, 1939.

The work of continuing in the Philippines fell to Mr. Frost and with the fortunate outcome of the war it is to be hoped that his plans for the Philippines will all materialize.

At the January meeting of the City Planning Advisory Board, Chicago Plan Commission, a member rose to ask why the Plan Commission offered its services to small industries in Chicago, employing twenty-five men, more or less, to help them procure contracts for war work as contractors or subcontractors when such agencies as the Association of Commerce and like bodies were enlisted in the same effort. Did not that look like inadvisable competition?

Executive Director T. T. McCrosky replied that the Plan Commission was interested in seeing that the population of Chicago should not be reduced. If these smaller industries failed to get work for their plants, men would be dismissed and would seek employment in other cities. They and their families would move away from Chicago. Thus the population would be reduced rather than increased. The Commission's technical staff had calculated on a moderate increase in population in decades to come. Its plans for the orderly, healthful, and beautiful growth of Chicago were based on these calculations of growth.

The Commission's efforts are based on Chicago's improvement and growing influence, not on the city's retrogression. Therefore, the technical staff of the Commission invites small industries to consult them. They will bend their efforts to direct these industries to bureaus of the Federal Government or other agencies where contracts may be procured, thus keeping their Chicago plants working.

"Sixty Years a Builder" (A. Kroch & Son, 1942) is a book by Henry Ericsson that should appeal to every architect and builder interested in the building of Chicago since its charter as a city was granted in 1837 to the present day. It is much more than the autobiography of the author which the title page calls it. Henry Ericsson came to Chicago from Sweden in 1882 and immediately found employment as a bricklayer. His advancement through the years was such that by 1930 he had become the builder and contractor of some of Chicago's foremost structures.

What will interest the architect is the development of his story from the balloon frame house through to the highest type of steel skeleton, fire-safe skyscraper of today. The exhumed account books with notes of John M. Van Osdel, buried under the Palmer House while the Great Chicago Fire of '71 was raging, are carefully studied by the author and deductions drawn. This section of the book covers more than fifty pages. It is fascinating to the student of architectural history. It is hoped that eventually this once buried treasure will find its resting place in the archives of the Chicago Historical Society.

"Sixty Years a Builder" is a book of 380 pages with illustrations of the author's work in the art of building.

George Howe, of Philadelphia, A.I.A., has been appointed Supervising Architect of the Public Buildings Administration, Federal Works Agency, succeeding Louis A. Simon of Baltimore, who retired recently. An architect for more than twenty-five years, Mr. Howe has been associated with the office of Supervising Architect as consultant since 1939.

Dr. Siegfried Giedion of Harvard University, will lecture at the School of Design in Chicago on April 10th at 8 p.m. on "The Anonymous History of the Nineteenth Century and the Spirit of Invention."



## Illinois Society February-March Meetings

The Chicago Bar Association is a favorite meeting place now for the Illinois Society of Architects. The quarters are newly rebuilt in the upper stories of 29 S. La Salle St., the clubroom assigned to the Society is broad and roomy, the colors are pleasing, the furniture is comfortable and good looking, the lighting is superb, and last, but not least, the dinner and services are good. So the Society had its regular monthly meeting there on February 24 attended by fifty members.

In beginning proceedings, after the dinner, President Ryan reversed the usual order and presented the speaker of the evening, Alderman Arthur G. Lindell after whose address and discussion came the regular business of the Society.

Alderman Lindell is chairman of the committee to rezone Chicago and has been working in this capacity with extraordinary application and understanding since 1937. Chicago's present Zoning Ordinance, its first, was passed in 1923. Like zoning ordinances of other cities in other states, it has many imperfections and has been punctured often because of impractical requirements and impossible fulfillments by rulings of the Zoning Board of Appeals. The Alderman stated that Illinois and Wisconsin had perhaps the worst records of support in the Supreme Courts of those states for their zoning ordinances. He cited Louisiana Supreme Court, among others, as an instance where the Zoning Ordinance of New Orleans had been strongly upheld by the highest court in that state.

Alderman Lindell stated that now, after five years of research, study, and labor, the new Zoning Ordinance was ready and printed but not yet adopted by the Common Council. The new ordinance divides the city into nine use or zone districts. The act is original in many ways and not a copy of an ordinance in use in other cities. It aims to correct, in the nine districts, lot and land percents found so faulty in the old law. It aims to be so clear, so well thought out that the Board of Appeals will be restricted in granting changes. This, it is thought, is in the public interest. It looks forward to 1960 and even to 1975 through use maps developed by the Chicago Plan Commission in connection with the master plan of the city for the consummation of this new zoning.

The city's area is 211 square miles now. Blight is growing and must be stopped for this cancerous growth is tending to reduce the population of Chicago materially. The ordinance contemplates eventually the extension of the downtown loop and restrictions of buildings in the loop to a height of twelve stories with an extension to not over twenty stories back of street and lot lines. Chicago's record in permitting, at times in its history, too high buildings does not compare favorably with the action of other large communities. The new ordinance contemplates permitting the highest buildings along the lake shore and restricting this height to one block back. March 30 is the date set for a public hearing on the ordinance.

President Ryan contributed something on past experience with the old Zoning Ordinance. He invited questions from the floor to be answered by Alderman Lindell. There were not many of these.

Now the business meeting began. The President had acting Secretary Llewellyn read the minutes of the January 27 meeting. There were no new committee reports. So the President took up letters he had received from various Federal departments apropos the employment of architects in war work, in defense housing, or whatever. He told of the questionnaire that would reach all members through the mail, each Society member receiving four copies which are to be filled out and returned to the Society. The President and Directors will study these and bend their best efforts to directing them to departments or agencies where the services of the applicant may be made of use. Of course, the whole subject revolves around getting work to maintain an architect's office and even abandoning the office and taking a job with the Government in Washington or elsewhere. The filled in questionnaires are intended to give the information so that the Society's officials may make the appeals to the proper agency or direct the signer to the proper source. One young member advanced the thought that the Society might even organize as a soviet republic and make it its business to plant every member in a job. This, of course, was thought a most impractical, if ideal, suggestion.

Fifty men and one woman came to the March 24 dinner and meeting of the Illinois Society of Architects to hear the last word in Federal housing regulations and also to listen to the report of President Ryan of his and Financial Secretary, Herman L. Palmer's sojourn in Washington, D. C. on March 17, 18, and 19 in the interest of jobs, Federal or other, for members of the I.S.A.

Of down state members present there were J. Fletcher Lankton of Peoria, Joseph W. Royer of Urbana, Ensign Cook, Raymond A. Orput and Mr. Lobdell of Rockford. The lady present was Miss Mary Ann Crawford, graduate in architecture of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. She was becomingly gowned in cerise and being a good conversationalist there was a flutter of masculinity in her immediate vicinity.

President Ryan opened proceedings by introducing Mr. Orvil R. Olmsted of the Federal Public Housing Authority of the National Housing Agency as the special speaker of the program. This agency is taking over practically all the Federal housing agencies that have been operating more or less independently during the last six or eight years. The new agency will be known as the FPHA with headquarters in Washington and with branch offices in Chicago, Detroit, and other metropolitan cities.

Mr. Olmsted was delegated from Washington to appear and present the housing situation to this meeting of the Illinois Society. Mr. Olmsted did this in the form of a specially prepared paper which he read. The paper was an historical review of housing in this country during the last eight or nine years through various Governmental agencies with Federal aid. The speaker referred to the varied character of housing produced up to now with the hundred millions or billions of Federal money that had been appropriated, either directly by Congress or allocated from funds voted by Congress into the President's hands. Since Pearl Harbor all Federal housing efforts are concentrated on defense housing.

The speaker reviewed housing legislation and execution and went into detail as to the operation of the Lanham bill recently enacted into law by the Congress.

At the conclusion of his paper there were questions from the floor such as: "How will architects make themselves available to the officials?" The answer was long and involved. But it did develop that Mr. John B. Blanford, newly appointed housing official in Washington, was the court of last resort. Asked about remuneration to architects, the speaker replied that nothing was settled as to fees. He made it clear that architects must do site planning for demountable houses.

At the end of questions and answers President Ryan thanked Mr. Olmsted for his interesting and illuminating paper and the guest left the meeting. It should be said that Mr. Orvil R. Olmsted, with years of experience in Washington as a housing official, will head the Chicago office of the new FPHA. Before going to Washington, Mr. Olmsted functioned as a practicing architect in the state of Michigan. F. Charles Starr, once a practicing architect in Chicago, will head the Detroit office of this agency. A Mr. Wadsworth is at the head of the entire agency in Washington. This ended part one of the evening's program.

After a short recess the meeting reconvened to hear President Ryan's report of his and Mr. Palmer's recent visit to Washington. It is not the purpose of the Bulletin to give a detailed report of the Society's delegates' Washington experiences. Readers must be content with a generalized bird's eye view of the Society's delegates' three days in the magic maze of official Washington.

Proceedings, however, began with acting Secretary Llewellyn's reading of the minutes of the February meeting; Legislative committee chairman Olson's correspondence apropos bill 1617 before Congress recommending passage; the President's verbal report of the Chicago Building Congress' banquet on March 5 where Sullivan Jones was the principal speaker and the attendance was 1,000. The President reported that from Congress-President Oscar Rosenthal he had learned the Congress was to meet in Washington April 5. Some of the correspondence between President Ryan and public officials was read. He announced that the new AEM contract was not yet released.

The Ryan-Palmer Washington experiences include a cordial welcome from Edmund R. Purves, Washington A.I.A. representative which makes him the I.S.A. representative since the I.S.A. is an association member of the A.I.A. Purves helped with advice. The

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## Chicago Chapter February-March Meetings

The Chicago Chapter A.I.A. February meeting, falling on the twentieth, was a joint meeting with Producers' Council Club of Chicago. They met in the Tavern Club, at 6:30, had a very good dinner in the Edgar Miller room, or shall we say the Henry the eighth room, attended by perhaps seventy-five architects and producer's Council Club members. All seemed to be in a receptive mood when the talk fest began.

President Loeb, with the vocal approval of the majority, dispensed with all regular business and reading of minutes. In getting down to the program for the evening he called upon Mr. McCiverin, Vice-President of the Producers' Council Club, to introduce Gael Sullivan, first speaker. As nearly everybody in Chicago who has any contact with building knows, Gael Sullivan is today Illinois District Director of FHA. And Gael, with his impressive personality, his voice, his unhesitant flow of language, eloquent periods, and drama, was, as always, a success on his feet. He told stories, was ready for questions and answers, scattered figures in billions as if he were dealing cards from a deck, spoke of substandard homes, and came to defense housing dwelling upon the replanning of the Calumet district. He showed block plans mounted on cardboard and set on the speakers' table.

President Loeb called upon Alfred Shaw to introduce the next speaker who was none other than Howard Myers of New York, Editor of the "Architectural Forum." The invitations had it that Myers would speak on "Civilian Defense with particular reference to the architectural aspects." Shaw's introduction of Mr. Myers was humorous and Myers throughout his talk preserved the humorous vein. He did not take himself or what he said too seriously. He, like his predecessor Sullivan, has personality, not to say magnetism. He began by telling stories, mentioned George Howe, newly appointed Supervising Architect at Washington, touched on Civilian Defense, blackouts, and closed on the subject of big planning for post-war days.

The evening was a success not because of anything new the speakers had said for everything they said had been said many times before. It showed, however, how large a part personality and personal magnetism play in impressing an audience. Gael Sullivan came from Boston to Chicago in recent years and was first heard of as an official of FHA, then as secretary to Mayor Kelly, then as a momentary candidate for the United States Senatorship of the dominant Democratic organization in Chicago, next Secretary of the Chicago Plan Commission's Advisory Board, and now Illinois District Director of FHA. He may go far. Howard Myers was a successful advertising manager when Henry R. Luce acquired the "Architectural Forum." Luce made Myers managing editor. Alfred Shaw in his introduction of Myers stated that Mr. Myers had achieved phenomenal success in making an architectural magazine pay.

—A. W.

American architects are open-minded. They are glad to hear what their confrères from other lands have to say about American efforts and welcome criticism. Architects from abroad have been coming to America to study and criticize our efforts for well nigh fifty years. The late Thomas E. Tallmadge told a story of an English architect from London coming to Chicago and lecturing to his confrères here in Fullerton Hall, Art Institute on modern English domestic architecture. He showed exteriors and interiors of London middle class town houses, the interiors being reminiscent of what has been called Eastlake style with many of its nicknacks and gadgets on mantel shelves and on corner tables. Tallmadge would smile pleasantly and say that our London friend seemed to be oblivious of the fact that the United States had made a fine reputation for its plans and treatment of homes for the middle class together with bathrooms and creature comforts second to those of no other land.

But at the time American architects were much absorbed in the problem of higher buildings for offices and business houses and the steel skeleton, fireproofing, elevators, and the like, were deeply studied. Our London friend had no thought to express on this problem.

A few years later we entertained and listened to the opinions on American architecture of a flock of Holland architects who had been carried away by the published work of Frank Lloyd Wright.

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## Unification for Metropolitan New York

The Unification committee of the New York Chapter A.I.A. recommends that all registered architects in the New York Metropolitan area, about 2,500 in number, be merged into one all embracing architectural organization regardless of A.I.A. Chapters, state societies or associations, etc., and including those with no professional affiliations.

The committee would have a full time salaried executive director working under the general direction of an Executive committee who would aim to achieve:

(1) A well directed public relations program which includes selling the profession to the public by a publicity campaign; (2) Active interest in local, State and National legislation as it affects architecture; (3) Active campaign to put the planning of public buildings in the hands of private architects; (4) Periodic bulletins on matters of vital interest to the profession; (5) Return to private architects the practice of architecture; (6) Liaison with the New York State Association of Architects and A.I.A. in Washington.

To be able to carry out the above a sizeable fund is required. Such a fund is not available to architectural groups working as separate units.

## 74th A. I. A. Convention

The 74th convention of the American Institute of Architects will be held in Detroit, Michigan, June 23, 24, 25, and 26, 1942. L. C. Dillenback is chairman of the Convention committee. Chapter delegates to the convention must be voted upon from members in good standing on May 23. The number of state association delegates must be determined after January 1, 1942, from members in good standing at that time. The program to be followed at the 74th convention will be published in the June 1 Bulletin.

Julian C. Levi, New York, announces 1941 medal awards given by the American Group of the Société des Architectes Diplômés par le Gouvernement.

To Princeton University, having the best record of accomplishment in the teaching of architecture on the general principles of the École des Beaux Arts, a gold medal.

To Glen Paulsen of the University of Illinois, student obtaining the greatest number of values in the national competitions of the Beaux Arts Institute of Design, a gold medal and prize of \$50.00.

To J. C. Tighe, student of the University of Pennsylvania, was given the silver medal.

## P. W. R. Reports

Remarked Melvin E. Scheidt, Acting National Director, Public Works Reserve at the New York Architectural League, January 22. . .

Approximately 50 per cent of the country's efforts will be devoted during this emergency to military endeavors. We must, therefore, face the problem of how to divert that 50 per cent back into civilian life. We cannot depend upon the government to care for anywhere near that 50 per cent through "public works."

The Federal government can take up only 10 per cent to 20 per cent of the slack of unemployment. We learned in 1930 that public works is not a panacea for unemployment. The National Resources Planning Board began in 1938 a survey of 1930 conditions and a study of how to avoid those shortcomings.

The P.W.R. is sponsored by the Federal Works Agency, and co-sponsored by the National Resources Planning Board, and the funds are provided by the W.P.A.

P.W.R. is appropriating no money for detailed plans and specifications. Instead it operates in the field of public administration.

There is a Committee working in each State. Cities and municipalities are asked to send the P.W.R. a listing of their needs for analysis. Occasionally financial assistance is given in the form of advance payments of loans.



## A Retired Architect Speaks

... I remember a story about Mr. Frank Miles Day that always amused me. It was something like this: Mr. Day was on the witness stand, and a heckling lawyer said to him: "Mr. Day, did you ever make a mistake?" "Not that I can remember," said Mr. Day.

But coming back to "practice," the only way anybody can get anything is by practicing it. You practice tennis, or you practice bridge; and practice makes perfect. The Greeks kept on building temple after temple, and the Christians kept on building cathedral after cathedral, and damn the expense. The competitive thing was there, and the practice thing was there, and both outfits took two or three centuries in the process.

Now, there was another place where the ancients had the advantage over us moderns in architecture, and that was that they had plenty of money to spend. I do not like the term "money," because perhaps it was not money in those days. It was really energy; just a flow of human energy that could be controlled and directed. We have the exact same flow of energy today, except I suppose it is ten to one hundred times as big as in ancient times, but that flow of energy does not go into architecture. It goes into airplanes and tanks and ships and motor cars. It goes in by the billion. The fellows who are building airplanes today can put out a cheap little machine for a couple of million dollars or so, and have it blown up and everybody killed, and all that is said is, "Oh, well, what the hell, we learned something." So then they start in to build one costing more, and rectify their mistakes.

We are not allowed to do that in architecture.

An architect once told me there were only two main questions the clients ask. One was: "When will it be done?" The other was: "How much will it cost?"

The airplane builders and the tank builders are asked; "When will it be done," but as for the cost, the hell with that.

I said, a little way back, it was an advantage to me to be able to talk from the position of one who was retired. I realized, through the "grape-vine"—and, really, it was not very difficult for me because the "grape vine" was sometimes pretty articulate—that I was supposed to be a most terribly expensive architect. This irritated me, and to my dying day I will never believe it. Of course, the meat of the matter is, not how many dollars and cents does a particular thing cost. The real word is the one so frequently used by our Business brethren—namely, Value. There is a question which comes in here of the relation between how much does it cost and how much do you get. An architect's job is not to save money. The owner pays him to spend money. If he doesn't know how to spend money he is no good as an architect. . . .

We all know, I suppose, the Paris Opera House. To me, that always seemed a magnificent example of spending money. It was done fairly recently—about 1870, I think—and when one examines it architecturally one finds that Mr. Garnier must have had a very definite idea that an opera house looked nice with a whole lot of people moving up and down staircases. What I am getting at is that a large percentage of the cube of the building is simply devoted to staircases, and devoted at the price, I fancy, of a good many million francs.

It is quite an important thing in a discussion of this kind to come to what the debaters call the "definition of terms": What is Architecture? A cathedral, a palace, a great house? They are all architecture. But can we call an office building, an apartment house, a factory, or a housing project (and I know at this point I am treading upon some of you gentlemen's toes) architecture at all? I do not think so. Not in the big sense. These latter classifications are designed to make money, and the former, as I pointed out before, are designed to spend money. Perhaps that makes a pretty clear line of demarkation. The two types look different.

If we are considering the countenances of two human beings, and one was a holy man like St. Francis of Assisi and another was a good man like George Washington, would we expect their countenances and their kind and patient and sorrowful eyes to look the same as the dirty glint in the eye of a money-lender? The jobs that St. Francis and George Washington had to do make them look one way, and the money-lending job makes the money-lender look the other way.

So it all comes down to this: that architecture is a pretty troublesome kind of companion—one that is very lovely when achieved but pretty hard to achieve.

I have not said much so far about ancient and modern house architecture itself. I am really afraid to tackle the modern.

I cannot keep from laughing at the very hot-stuff Modernists. They seem to be in a perfect fury about something. They are mad

all through. It seems as if they suffered from frustration. The argument is, very simply, that one must not be a stick-in-the-mud and one must move with the times but when they get going, they knock out everything that got done in the past, both the good and the bad, and by that time it always seems to me they have gotten themselves into a fix.

Now, just why should a house be built mostly out of glass? And yet, as far as I can see, that is one of the ambitions of the Modern. Put in the glass and let the light in, and put up the curtains and keep the light out. Put in the glass to make it cold, and pile in the radiation to counteract it. Fine for the glass manufacturers and fine for the heating manufacturers, but what happens to the poor benighted creature that has to live inside? He likes to look at the view, he says. Most of the time when he is indoors, he spends looking at a glass circle at the bottom of which is a whiskey and-soda, and most of the views he could look at—he'd better have his back to.

However, if we approach the subject from the Gallup Poll stand-point, and consider the thousands or hundreds of thousands of horrible little houses that are going up all over the countryside, and selling anywhere from \$4,000 to \$8,000, we find that very few indeed are Modern. There seems to be a passion for Brick Little brick so-called Colonial houses, with double-hung windows and variegated materials to put in the fanciful touch; a house of brick with a couple of stone corners, and maybe some white clapboards put in just to mix things up and attract the buyer—though God knows why.

As perhaps some of you know, I never went to school, myself, but grew, just like Topsy, and any little thing I found out about architecture came mainly through my eyes. I used to go to Europe pretty often shortly after we started in practice, and every time I came back some poor client got himself fixed up in a house in the style of the country I had last visited. After a trip to England, in the Cotswold district, in 1911, nothing would do but I must jam my best friend into what was as near as I could come to the Cotswold manner, done at St. Davids, Pa. This one had casement windows in it, opening out, and in big groups; and a hell of a time I had selling that idea to a cross old real estate man who said it was all very well for me, a young man striving to make my reputation, but what was going to happen to him, poor soul, who had to put up the money? The only way I got that cross old real estate man to go ahead with it was to waive my own commission until after the house should be sold. That little offer did the trick and the old fellow lapped up the idea like a kitten. It may be of some interest that the house ultimately did get sold, and for a good price.

The next time I went abroad I went to Italy, and after that Frank McIlhenny was the sufferer. I tried to get him to build an Italian house but he choked over it, so what ultimately got done was partly Italian and partly Meigs.

Then the War came, and French Ways and Their Meanings bit deep into me. . . By this time I felt as if I were trying to talk architectural Esperanto, and being young and energetic I spent all my time trying to make everything as difficult as possible: difficult for me, difficult for the builder, and difficult for the owner. But there was a lot of fun mixed up in it.

Finally, with old age creeping on, it seemed to me that just to build a decent house was trouble enough, and so, in the last five or ten years most of our stuff has been just ordinary Georgian. When I say "Georgian," I mean windows that slide up and down. . .

Then there is another reason why I think house architecture is harder to do than it was thirty years ago, and that is on account of the decay in the state of mind of the client. Something seems to have happened to clients. They got "took," as it were. The economists have got hold of them, and the specialists have got hold of them, until they have got to a point where they don't trust anybody or anything. They seem to think that they can design a house just as well as the architect. This is an old tendency, but getting always worse. It is quite possible that this same tendency goes through the other professions—like the Law and Medicine, but I think not quite as badly as it does through Architecture. But, at any rate, it is all caused by surrounding world conditions.

—Arthur I. Meigs, Philadelphia, Pa.

From his talk before the Philadelphia Chapter, A.I.A.

A sensational new plasticizing process has been developed by Forest Products Laboratory at Madison, Wisconsin. Under treatment with Urea, an inexpensive chemical produced in quantity by Du Pont, it is possible to twist wood like rope, bend it like lead, mold it like dough, and give it the hardness of some types of steel. It is still in the experimental stage, however, not yet commercially available.



## From a Good Sermon

The quality of some of the defense housing groups already constructed (not the few good examples which have been widely published, but many others which have been shown, if at all, only in advertising and trade leaflets) is so bad, so stupid, so ill-considered, both architecturally and from the larger planning points of view, as to show how dangerous this whole pressure to relax standards is. To be sure, they furnish a roof and the minimum elements of shelter necessary for some kind of family living; but of those greater advantages of community amenity, even of community efficiency, which a trained imagination could have furnished at no extra cost there is not a sign. These are shelters in stupid clusters—drab, discouraging, and ugly. I do not think it is fantastic to imagine that community pride and community affection have something to do with the morale and the efficiency of workers.

In order to pay the great debt the nation owes to its hundreds of thousands of workers should it not furnish them more than mere shelter—with places where a pleasant and inspiring community life can develop? To place a thousand shacks crowded together on an ill-conceived community plan without facilities for education, recreation, or in some cases even decent local shopping possibilities, is not enough. It is destructive of the very ideals we are supposedly supporting with our entire power, and it is to create vast and immediate slum areas after the emergency is over. We must preserve community standards, and only the architects are in a position to see that this is done. Speed and low cost do not necessarily mean the abandonment of architectural standards. Quite the reverse.

—From Talbot F. Hamlin in February "Pencil Points."

## Conflagration Menace to Civilians

"Conflagration is the number one menace to America's civilian population," George H. Gray of New Haven, speaking for the Connecticut Defense Council, pointed out at the regional conference of New England chapters of the A.I.A. "The cities of the United States are tinderboxes ready to be set off with ridiculous ease by a few incendiary bombs. Fire breaks should be cut through important areas to prevent flames spreading over wide sections of cities. Fire hazards around defense plants, hospitals, communication centers, and other vital zones should be removed at once. Families living in densely populated neighborhoods surrounding natural targets for bombs should be evacuated to temporary camps, spaced apart, beyond city limits."

## The Uses of Metals Shift

Copper and tin in war have a rendezvous with death. They fly in bullets, whirl in the rotating bands in shells. These strategic metals enter into other vital production and construction for war. In plating, silver can substitute for chromium and nickel, both metals short for war production. Silver is going to be drafted for the duration.

Silver may replace nickel in the nickel and part of the copper too. The old coin of three-quarters copper and one-fourth nickel will be half silver, half copper. Silver sells for \$5 a pound, which is about ten times the price of tin. Silver is the cheapest metal that can be obtained without priorities. Electrically silver is better than copper. Industrial uses of silver have been investigated by the National Bureau of Standards.

## Manhole Covers Tempt Junkies

Who can deny that we live in a progressive age! Even collectors of old iron are progressive as the sewer commissioner of Eastchester, N. Y., will testify. In that city unscrupulous "junkies" have been stealing manhole covers and selling them elsewhere than in Eastchester.

The sewer commissioner retired in deep thought; then he came to light with a device he had contrived by which collapsible arms

operated by toggle rods can be drawn to a horizontal position by turning the screw, thus projecting the arms under the manhole frame flange. The screw cannot be turned without the operator having a special key wrench that fits over the bolt. Wrenches possessed only by sewer department operatives.

The sewer commissioner finds that his device not alone will stop theft, it will stop cover rattling and foil saboteurs tempted to plant a bomb in the sewer.

## Housing

### Large Scale Housing with Non-Public Funds

The largest privately financed housing project being carried through today is "Clinton Hill" erected for the Equitable Life Assurance Society. "Clinton Hill" is going up on a site adjacent to the Brooklyn Navy Yard, Brooklyn, New York. Its approximate cost is \$7,000,000.

The plans call for eleven apartment buildings of reinforced concrete construction, ranging from ten to fourteen stories in height to accommodate the families of 1,200 defense workers. Included also are two store and restaurant groups. About one-third of the land area will be covered by buildings. Harrison, Foulhoux & Abramovitz are architects; Starrett Bros. & Eken, general contractors.

### Chicago Housing Authority

The Authority reports Frances Cabrini Homes, cost approximately \$3,736,000, on the north side, between Chicago and Hudson Avenues, will have the first 100 units ready for occupancy July 15. The completed project of 586 units will be ready for tenants by the end of 1942.

Project Illinois 2-2-S at 14th Street and Racine Avenue will have 100 units ready by July 1. The remaining 734 units are to be finished by December 31, 1942. Total cost \$4,840,000.

Project Illinois 2-4 at 31st and 32nd Streets and Lituania Avenue, near the Central Manufacturing District, will have 144 dwelling units all of 4½ and 5 rooms each and will be built in the two-story row house type. Estimated cost \$864,000.

Project Illinois 2-5 at 25th-26 Streets, California and Washtenaw Avenues, will have 128 dwelling units of 4½ and 5½ rooms each. They will be of the two-story row house type, costing about \$782,000. This project will accommodate workers in the International Harvester Company and Central Manufacturing District.

Project Illinois 2-6, under consideration, will have 108 dwelling units costing about \$648,000. Location is in the vicinity of 43rd Street and Lowe Avenue.

Locations for the last three named projects are to accommodate workers in defense industries. Approval has been obtained from the Chicago Plan Commission.

Libbey-Owens-Ford Glass Co., will begin producing several hundred prefabricated houses per month at its remodeled Ottawa, Ill., plant. The glass company will fabricate the houses for sale and delivery to the government at Ottawa. Contractors will pick up, deliver and erect the fabricated homes at designated places. Houses will include three typical floor plans of one, two and three bedrooms; houses will be insulated, well finished, and equipment items will be of good quality. The plan includes large window areas.

The President has allocated \$19,800,000 to the Alley Dwelling Authority, Washington, D. C., out of the \$300,000,000 fund for demountable housing to permit construction of 4,500 houses in the District. This money was not included under the Lanham act restrictions, which prevent use of other housing funds in the District of Columbia.

Of the 42,000 prefabricated demountable houses ordered by the Federal Works Agency (see February-March, '42 Bulletin) 23,933 units have been allocated to 34 different localities in different states. Out of this number Illinois is assigned 1,300 units as follows: Alton—200, Crab Orchard—400, Joliet—500, Rockford—200.



## Mendelsohn's Architecture Shown in Chicago

In the galleries of The Arts Club of Chicago, in the Wrigley building, was shown March 6-25 an exhibition in black and white drawings and photographs of the architecture of Eric Mendelsohn, conspicuous modernist German architect of the 1920's-30's. Mr. Mendelsohn was born in East Prussia and practiced in Germany from 1914 to 1933 when he migrated to England. He practiced in England from 1933 to 1937. From 1937 to 1941 he was in Palestine where much important building was done from his designs. In 1941 he came to the U.S.A.

The first twelve exhibits are all drawings without evidence of having been carried out in building materials. This period is marked 1914 to 1922. But Eric Mendelsohn made the architectural world beyond his own circle sit up when his Einstein Tower, at Potsdam near Berlin, was much reproduced in photographs in the western world. This was in 1920-21. The exhibition shows much work done in Germany in the period 1920-1933 including factories, Universum Cinema, large department stores in Stuttgart, Breslau, Chemnitz, the great Columbus House (office building in Berlin), newspaper pavilion at the Cologne Exposition, Metal Workers Union building in Berlin, city planning projects, and finally a house for himself.

In England his activity can not have produced many executed works to judge by the exhibit of this period in that country 1933-1937. But he did start, while in England, on the development of his architecture for Palestine in 1934.

Mendelsohn's work in Palestine includes the following executed structures: Hebrew University, Hadassah University Medical Center, house for Salman Schocken, and Anglo Palestine Bank, all in Jerusalem; Government Hospital at Haifa; Trade School for Refugees at Jagur; Agricultural College, Daniel Wolf Laboratories, house for Professor Chaim Weizmann, all in Rehoboth.

The intense contrasts produced by his black brush strokes against the white paper seem much toned down in the executed work to judge by the photographs. And the work in Palestine is actually quiet with its unbroken concrete or stucco walls from grade to parapet except for the often very sensitive placement of windows and doors. The exhibit was of great architectural interest.

## Letters to the Editor

### New England Architects' Registration Laws

*The Editor:* In reading the February-March issue of the Bulletin, I noticed an article on the new Massachusetts law for the registration of architects, in which there is an error. Massachusetts is not the only state in New England, other than Connecticut, that has a law governing the practice of architecture. A law "to create a Board for the Examination and Registration of Architects" became effective in Rhode Island on April 20, 1936, and has been in operation for nearly six years. It was my pleasure to serve on that Board for the first five years, and while the Rhode Island law, in common with those in most other states, is hardly what the profession desires in every respect, we feel sure that time will take care of the greatest problem, registration by exemption.

—John F. Hogan, Architect, Providence, R. I.

### The Philippines

*The Editor:* I enclose a MS about the Philippines. As you know, I spent a little less than two years there as City Plannng and Architectural Adviser to the President.

It is hard for me to realize that the Islands have been invaded. From my recollection of the Japanese as I saw them in their own country, it gives me the creeps when I think of the indignities that our people as well as the Filipinos are suffering at their hands.

In the short time that we spent in the Orient, I came to realize how important the Philippines are to us. Our stake in the East contributes to our greatness as a nation. The Pacific is our ocean, and our uninterrupted commerce upon it is essential to our economy.

—Harry Talfourd Frost, Mac Curdy Ranch, Phoenix, Ariz.

## Waterproof Reinforced Concrete Necessary

If our reinforced concrete structures are to have such a reasonable life as fifty years, then the vital steel must have protection for that time, and thorough waterproofing appears to be the only means of giving it such protection. It seems to me that the subject warrants very careful examination and a definite expression of opinion by some reliable, disinterested body.

—M. P. Hite, C. E.—U. S. Coast Guard, Jacksonville, Fla.

The paint in the interior of the new American Export Air Lines' non-stop trans-Atlantic commercial flying boats when in contact with fire produces a flame smothering gas.

The catfish of the African swamps swims upside down on occasion—the only fish known to do so.

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a Swiss from Zurich, came to give a course of lectures at the Harvard School of Architecture, traveled about the country lecturing, and has since published "Space, Time, and Architecture." He is booked to speak again in Chicago on April 10.

All of these men have been more than welcome and their opinions are listened to with great respect.

The most recent foreign architect to come and tell us how to interpret the modern day in building is Eric Mendelsohn, a German architect who did much important building in his native land in the 1920's and 1930's. He was the guest at dinner of the Chicago Chapter A.I.A. at the Arts Club on March 24 speaking to an audience of 95 men who were deeply interested in his lecture and in the exhibit of his work shown on the walls of the Arts Club. A review of the exhibit is printed elsewhere in this issue.

The dinner called for 6:30 P. M. began at 7:27. About 48 persons partook of the dinner. The diners, about 8:30, adjourned to the lecture room, already half filled with Armour students. President Loeb called the meeting to order at 8:46 and by 9:44 the Mendelsohn address was finished and the company adjourned. Minutes of the previous meeting were not read but referred to a committee of two: Paul Gerhardt Jr. and Melville Chatten. Three new Chapter members were announced: Messrs. Scribbs, Edward Probst, and Jones. In the absence of Lawrence Perkins, Treasurer, for the balance of the Chapter year, Sam Marx would function.

Now came the introduction of the speaker of the evening, Eric Mendelsohn, made by Sam Marx in the absence of the Program chairman, Nathaniel Owings. Mr. Mendelsohn read his paper and had slides thrown upon the screen. The speaker has a good vocabulary though his English pronunciation and accentuation leaves much to be desired. His stated philosophy and scientific explanations were not easy to follow.

The speaker called his address: "Architecture in a Rebuilt World." Nobody can speak with finality, he said. Inevitable changes are shaking the world today. A statement about scientific facts and technological was not clear to many of his listeners. Of the Jefferson Memorial, recently completed in Washington, D. C., he was most critical. On the other hand the new Smithsonian Gallery of Art to be built in the Mall at Washington by Eliel and Eero Saarinen, he held to be well conceived architecture. Mr. Mendelsohn, according to the Michigan Society Bulletin, will write a book on modern architecture. Plenty of precedent for that!

—A. W. and L. J. W.

There are under construction now for the armed forces of the U. S., demountable steel frame and sheet steel covered huts for use of these forces in the arctic and in the tropics. These unique structures with insulated walls have been found suitable for all types of climate. They are huts about 17 feet wide with a ceiling height of about 9 feet at the center line and are designed to house 12 men. They can be easily extended in length to provide quarters for any number of troops. When built in tropical zones, the end bulkhead is moved back several feet to provide an overhanging eave for the elimination of heat and glare.



(Continued from Page 2, Column 2)

... probably putting it on spindly stilts as if to dazzle the plebs by an engineering trick. He would erect a "functional" building as one big room, to be divided by movable screens to suit changing needs. In the end he has produced nothing of beauty. He has not even produced good shelter. The naive of this trend would introduce curious shapes and forms for architectural effect, presumably as protest against precedent. A street lined with buildings of this character, after the corners have begun to chip is disillusionment.

For public buildings there is room for modern freshness, but not for capricious fancy or pure invention. The new Capitol in Quezon City for which the foundation has been completed, was designed in the deplored classic—in this case Roman Corinthian—to be executed in concrete. Columns, loggias, dome, sculptured pediments, miles of enriched mouldings, correct proportions, the usual stuff. House-cleaning had not reached the Philippine equivalent of the Procurement Division when the plans were made. But now the Capitol will wait. Recommendations for simplification had already been made. They include the omission of many elements, and all ornament. The building is situated in a huge oval park, where it will be viewed from great distances—distances from which applied decoration would lack definition. But from afar the deep shadows of the arcades and other sheltering elements will give vigor in the bright tropical sunlight.

All this leaves us with the "starved classic" as one unfortunate phrase-making critic would put it. Be that as it may, the Capitol with its clean simple surfaces will have its enrichment in the form of sculpture, vigorous in its execution. There will be free-standing groups and reliefs, and metal grilles. These are sufficient to complete the quota of decoration. It is strangely true that the sculptors have found themselves in this chaotic decade.

While I'm on this subject, and since it is strictly between ourselves, I enjoyed the bit in the February-March BULLETIN. It gives a clue to the failure of architects to lead the way in many of the vast housing and planning works. I refer to the word picture of buildings of the future. No more skyscrapers. . . ." (A good slogan, until an ambitious client comes along. Vertical-makes-for-vertigo is bright when last seen was trying to break the height limit regulation of the Washington Zoning Ordinance. And Le Corbusier, after he found that American elevators will work both ways, wants to put all the slum dwellers in 10-story buildings.) "Buildings will weigh about one-third of what they do now. Masonry—brick, stone, cement—will not be used . . . Dynamic and alive"! Perhaps they will be styled by juke-box, stage-set and industrial designers, and streamlined like up-to-the-minute bookends and radios—for greater speed. This extraordinary prediction probably explains why architectural criticism appears in the journals of the profession, without benefit of architects. They quote any entrepreneur who may have a hand in guiding the architectural policy of vast housing and building agencies. Generally he has never designed a building, but he can play with blocks and models, and soon learns to paraphrase the utterances of his architectural subordinates. Let's have more of this "lightweight-house" whimsy, but with the killing—"the statements of the speaker are his own opinions and do not represent . . ."

When peace on Earth is restored, it is hoped that the architectural delirium will have abated, and that the mossy waddle which includes "functional," "machine to live in" will have gone with it. It is hoped too that the influences

of the "revolution," which has produced such stark monsters as the School of Industrial Technics and the Central School of the Revolution in Mexico will have subsided. I mention these buildings, because I have seen them recently and they are fresh in my memory. I fear that the school that engenders such dreary schemes is ruthless. It abhors color and nature.

The Japanese are in possession of our Philippines, as well as other rich lands of the Orient—lands which they will despoil. The Filipinos and our people who have made the Philippines their home will be the helpless prisoners of an ugly race, until that race is shorn of its power. The new Capital City will have to remain a dream for a while. In view of what has come to pass, will the Commonwealth-Independence Act function in 1946 to make the Philippines an independent sovereignty? Will Malacañan, so revered as the seat of authority that a president would be without prestige unless he lives there, be the home of a hissing emissary of the Son of Heaven? There is an interval now in which to consider the whole plan in the light of a new era, and a new economy. And this time it will be an economy in which we will have a definite objective in the Orient.

### The Brothers Asam

Giovanni Antonio Viscardi created in the years 1711 to 1714 the central feature of Trinity church in Munich. Italians were the teachers. The Bavarians were not only apt but receptive pupils. Their success was evidenced, in a striking manner, in the brothers Asam.

The younger of the two, Egid Quirin Asam (1692-1750), beginning as a sculptor, was more of an architect. Cosmas Damian Asam (1686-1739) was originally a painter of religious pictures and remained so to the last; architecture was more a side line. The brothers were sons of a fresco painter; Cosmas Damian worked for years with the father. They derived from the decorative arts, and never completely separating from them, they stepped up the decorative into architecture. In the years 1712 and 1713 the brothers were in Italy admiring Bernini's work and fortifying their own individuality. On their return to Bavaria they worked constantly together developing an extraordinary productivity and giving an epic, stimulating example of brotherly mutual-ity. Their most important work in Munich is the John Nepomuk church begun in 1733 and known as the Asam church.

Darwin closed his "The Descent of Man" with these words:

"Man may be excused for feeling some pride at having risen, though not through his own exertions, to the very summit of the organic scale; and the fact of his having thus risen, instead of having been aboriginally placed there, may give him hope for a still higher destiny in the distant future. . . . We must, however, acknowledge, as it seems to me, that man with all his noble qualities, with sympathy which feels for the most debased, with benevolence which extends not only to other men but to the humblest living creature, with his god-like intellect which has penetrated into the movements and constitution of the solar system—with all these exalted powers—Man still bears in his bodily frame the indelible stamp of his lowly origin."



## Giant City State Park

When Giant City State Park is mentioned, one thinks of prehistoric men, Yankee and Confederate feuds, geology and beautiful scenery. Ask any "informed" local resident about the neighborhood and he will tell you tales which will send you to the library for verification. Invariably local tradition is founded on fact, but in time becomes greatly exaggerated. In this instance, however, we can hardly blame them, for who can gaze upon those huge, smooth blocks set upon the valley floor and not think of it as the amusement of some giant of a forgotten age? Who can look at the wall of the stone fort and not wonder at its size and the toil it represents? Was it built by a prehistoric people? Apparently no one knows.

The park is situated in a unique section of Illinois. Its northern boundary lies at the southern edge of the only continental glacier that extended into southern Illinois. Ages ago it was a lowland plain slowly emerging from the sea. Now it is a hilly country worn down by the elements and is the eastern extension of the Missouri Ozarks. During the Civil War the Confederate and Union fringes were superimposed here and the clashes of the sympathizers are local legends.

In 1927 the State of Illinois purchased over a thousand acres located about fifty miles north of Cairo and seven miles south of Carbondale. This section is a part of "Egypt" which is known as the portion of the State south of the B & O railroad connecting St. Louis and Vincennes. The origin of the term is interesting. Paul M. Angle in the *Dictionary of American History* says, it is a colloquial term and is derived "from the deltalike character of the Cairo region and the presence of several Egyptian place names." In *Brinkerhoff's History of Marian County* one finds that during the early history of the State, famines were frequent in the newly settled "northern" districts, but the pioneers could always rely on the old southern section and often would travel southward and "would liken their journey to that of old, when the brethren of Joseph went down to Egypt to buy corn." The park is an irregular area made up of a series of tracks joined together forming a huge letter C. The base of the letter lies to the north and between the opening of the form is the sleepy little town of Makanda two miles east of U. S. 51.

The road from the north entrance passes through a narrow valley cut through the sand stone formations by the torrential thawing waters of the great glacier ice. From the eastern bluff projects a finger known as "Stonefort." Crossing the finger at one of its joints is an ancient stone wall about six feet wide and four to five feet in height and 285 feet long. The enclosed portion, eighty feet above the valley floor, is known as the "fort." The stones are of a size which could be carried by a man. They were brought from the base of the bluff and laid dry. There were other such walls in the district and J. G. Mulcaster says: "The builders of these forts seem to have belonged to a race of people who finished their work on earth before the real life work of men and nations began." On the other hand W. N. Moyers believes they were built by the Cherokee tribe because of their arrowheads found in the vicinity. There are similar walls across projecting bluffs in Kentucky, Tennessee and Missouri and Dr. Shepard of Springfield, Mo., after forty years study finally identified a similar feature in Lawrence County, Missouri, as an Indian fort. However, Lewis and Clark in their journal describe similar devices as Buffalo traps.

As we proceed southward, we pass through relatively open country and then enter another valley with high stone bluffs on each side, which forks out in two directions and at the angle of the Y is Giant City, a portion of the dividing bluff. According to George E. Ekblaw, of the State Geological Survey, this portion of the State rose and fell many times, ages ago, sometimes above and other times below sea level. This heaving caused the sandstone to crack in a vertical series in two main directions. Below the stone layer is a shale deposit. As the flooding waters wore away the shale bed support a block would slip away on its wet and "greasy" bed from the parent formation. Since these blocks are 40 to 50 feet high and 100 to 200 feet in horizontal dimensions, the effect of seeing them arranged in apparent order is uncanny and awe-inspiring.

At the southern extremity of the park is Signal Hill. Here Col.

Thompson lashed the stars and stripes to a high poplar in defiance to members of the *Golden Circle*, supporters of the Confederacy. Local tradition tells of deserters hiding here in the narrow valley and of the "underground railroad" to the north. No authentic investigation has ever been made of these traditions or the origin of Stonefort. Some day perhaps someone with time to spare will delve into these mysteries.

The State has developed the park with the co-operation of the National Park Service and the Civilian Conservation Corps. In 1934, a massive lodge was erected of native stone on Signal Hill by the CCC boys from plans prepared under the direction of the Supervising Architect's office. Now one can stay over night and prolong his visit to study the many unusual plants and geological curios and other reminders of past ages.

—Joseph F. Booton, Chief of Design

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delegates are indebted to both Illinois Senators for their cordial reception and to the senior Senator for his assistance in making appointments with officials our delegates were to interview. The reaction our delegates received from the officials was varied. President Ryan, however, said that in the present emergency architects who had received their license to practice in Illinois, would do well to dwell on their engineering qualifications rather than on their aesthetic ability and achievements. After some questions and answers, the meeting adjourned at 10 P. M.

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Mr. Wright's monumental publication by the Hollanders had appeared shortly before this visit. Our Dutch friends expressed disappointment that American cities were so little influenced by the designs of Mr. Wright. And then came architect Berlage, the Dutch architect from Amsterdam who built the Chamber of Commerce in that city. Berlage was very critical of our work.

Soon after this, great fires in San Francisco, Baltimore, and Rochester devastated large sections of those cities. The American architects studied the results of those fires on various building materials; so did the insurance underwriters and their engineers. The result was more stringent insurance regulations calling for more careful fireproofing of structural members, particularly steel columns and beams. Building ordinances were likewise effected. But underwriters regulations have a way of being enforced more rigidly than building ordinances for the reason that the insured is subject to penalization in his rate where protection, called for by the insurance regulations, is wanting.

Such distinguished architects as Sir Aston Webb, Sir Edwin Landseer Lutyens, both Englishmen, and Ragnar Ostberg, the Swedish architect of Stockholm's fine city hall, came to us primarily to receive from the A.I.A. gold medals in recognition of their work. The next acclaimed man to come was none other than Le Corbusier who spoke only in French and carried with him a student who Englished his words. Le Corbusier, a master of propaganda, was so well advertised when he came to Chicago that no less than 250 men and women attended the dinner and lecture in the Stevens Hotel arranged by the Chicago architects.

Then in recent years came those men who are identified with the German Bauhaus. They came to take teaching jobs in architectural schools and remain. They have been prolific in their criticism of our efforts and have built up a following. Professor S. Giedion

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Clarence Howard Blackall, prominent Boston architect, died at his home in Concord, Mass., March 5, age 85. Mr. Blackall is of particular interest to Illinois architects in that he was a member of the first class in architecture graduated at the University of Illinois at Urbana where he received his B. S. degree in 1877. Later the University made him an honorary A.M. The University commissioned him to design its Auditorium building which now graces the campus. He was the first holder of the Rotch Traveling Scholarship, 1884-86. Most of his conspicuous works are in and about Boston. Among these may be mentioned Tremont Temple, Copley Plaza Hotel, Colonial Theatre. He was made a fellow of the A. I. A. in 1891.